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BOOK REVIEWS

New Viewpoints in American History. By Arthur Meier Schlesinger. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922. XIV, 299 pp.)

Progress is said to be the law of life; and this should be no less true in the profession or occupation than in the physical body. New inventions and discoveries have proclaimed the advancement of the sciences; the more prosaic business of ferreting out and interpreting the past has had no press agent. But nevertheless, the leaven of honest and reasoning inquiry has been working, and some of the new discoveries made by the historians for the past quarter century are here set forth in this book under review. True enough these discoveries are not to be seen so much in the technique or methods of research or writing history, as in the new points of view that have been evolved. Influences that have played important parts in our past have long remained unnoted and apparently unknown. It has been only in the present generation that the importance of the West in our history has come to be generally appreciated. But the spirit of research among the present historians bids fair to leave no stone unturned in the quest for those elements which must be judiciously combined in their proper proportions, if our past as well as our present is to be truly interpreted.

The author of *New Viewpoints in American History* has viewed the work of the many investigators and with skill put together their findings and interpreted them for those, who have not had the time or inclination to read the many monographic contributions. Such subjects as the influence of immigration, geographic factors, chapters. Among the and women are treated in separate chapters. Among the other topics are: The Decline of Aristocracy in America; Radicalism and Conservatism in American History; The

American Revolution; The State Rights Fetish; The Foundations of the Modern Era; and the Riddle of the Parties.

Honest doubts there might be concerning the relative importance of different factors; but none can there be concerning the proposition that all of these are at least important. Some viewpoints that have not yet been sufficiently developed will undoubtedly be eventually recognized as being as important as many others.

One who has kept abreast of the times in historical developments is not very likely to disagree with the main contentions of this book, although one may not likely agree with every statement. Professor Schlesinger has performed a real service in bringing together and making a synthesis in one volume of these new and refreshing viewpoints.

E. M. C.

Chronicles of Chicora Wood. By Elizabeth W. Allston Pringle. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1922. IX, 366 pp. \$3.00.)

This is a delightfully written book, recounting the experience of the author, a lady of the Old Regime in the South. The daughter of an ante-bellum governor of South Carolina, she saw the beautiful side of Southern society before the Civil War and here portrays it in a most engaging way in her light reminiscences. The glory that was once Charleston's is made to live again: the stately homes along the Battery; the wealthy and cultured families, whose social connections extended north as far as Newport, and whose education was likely to be finished in Paris or Heidelberg; gay parties and gorgeous dresses. Charleston owed much of its prosperity at this time to the rice district for which it was an outlet; indeed, many of the families that made Charleston the city that it was, were rice planters. The method of cultivating the land and the economy of the large rice plantation, with its many slaves and its flatboats on the sluggish river, are described.